IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (canceled)

Claim 2. (new) In a lawn mower, hingedly connected articulating mower decks, comprising:

a first mower deck having a first mower frame member defining a first frame hole with a first axis;

a second mower deck having a second mower frame member defining a second frame hole with a second axis;

a first bushing having a first bushing hole and a first bushing axis, being sized for press fit receipt in the first frame hole, and being sized to rotatably coaxially receive a pin therein;

a second bushing having a second bushing hole and a second bushing axis, being sized for axially non-rotating receipt in the second frame hole, and being sized to rotatably coaxially receive a pin therein;

a pin having inboard and outboard ends and a pin axis, said pin sized to extend coaxially through the first and second bushing holes;

a connector connected to the outboard end of said pin and for connecting said pin to the second frame member and holding said pin against horizontal movement relative to the second frame member and for providing a stop for limiting movement of said second bushing toward the outboard end of said pin; and,

a retention member connected proximal to the inboard end of said pin and limiting movement of said bushings inwardly of said retention member.

Claim 3 (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 2 wherein the second frame hole has a non-round shape and wherein said second bushing has an outer non-round shape sized for mating receipt in the non-round shaped second hole.

Claim 4. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 3 wherein the second frame hole has a hexagonal shape and wherein said second bushing has an outer hexagonal shape.

Claim 5. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 2 wherein said connector includes a pin mount connected to the outboard end of said pin and includes a fastener shaped and configured for secure attachment to the second frame member.

Claim 6. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 5 wherein said connector holds said pin against any movement relative to the second frame member.

Claim 7. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 5 wherein the pin mount is a plate having an opening in which is securely held the outboard end of said pin.

Claim 8. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 7 wherein the pin mount includes at least two thrust holes and the hinge assembly further includes at least one thrust bolt configured for threaded advancement in one of the thrust holes and against the second frame member to pull the pin mount away from the second frame member and said pin and first and second bushings out of the first and second frame holes.

Claim 9. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 8 wherein a portion of said pin extends through the opening in the pin mount and outwardly therefrom, and wherein said pin has an outer surface and includes lubricating means for delivering lubricant to a portion of the outer surface of said pin and inside of said first bushing, the lubrication means including a fitting extending outwardly from the outboard end of said pin.

Claim 10. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 9 further including a collar connected to the outboard end of said pin and partially shielding the lubrication fitting.

Claim 11. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 2 wherein said pin has an outer surface and wherein said retention member includes a groove defined in said pin and includes a retention ring seated in the groove whereby at least a part of the retention ring extends outwardly of the outer surface of said pin.

Claim 12. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 11 wherein the retention ring is sufficiently resilient to permit radial expansion and movement over said pin and into the groove.

Claim 13. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 2 wherein said pin includes lubrication means to deliver a lubricant from one end of said pin to a space between said pin and said second bushing.

Claim 14. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 13 wherein said pin has an outer surface and wherein the lubrication means includes said pin having a channel defined in the outer surface and a passageway defined below the outer surface, the passageway extending from a fitting mounted to one of the inboard and outboard ends to the channel.

Claim 15. (new) The hingedly connected articulating mower decks of claim 2 further including a spacer disposed between said first and second bushings.